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712 622 dren. This was not because he was lacking in courage but because, as the focal point of the social prestige of the tribe, he could not be exposed to capture. The stigma of having one's chief tortured and eaten by one's enemies would be a disgrace [558] that would ruin a tribe socially for generations. Inside the fort was a rock enclosure in which the chief sought refuge in case the fort was taken. A complete victory resulted in a thorough looting of the enemy territory and the carrying off of the images of the gods. These sacred objects were considered to have lost their *mana* after such a defeat and so could be handled with impunity. The triumphant return was celebrated by a great feast, with torture of captives and human sacrifices to the gods. The captives' remains were cooked and eaten, and the feast ended with a period of general sexual license. This is about as close as anything could be to the old missionary idea of a cannibalistic orgy.

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726 In spite of this picture of warfare and its tremendous ceremonial importance, casualties were not very high and the natives actually showed no great courage in battle, although they yelled and capered and made a great noise. Even the greatest of the *toa* rarely had more than four of five killings to their credit. Weapons were large and showy but not well adapted to vigorous [411] hand-to-hand fighting. Some of the Marquesan clubs were eight feet long, made of ironwood, and weighing as much as twenty or twenty-five pounds. A direct blow from such a weapon would kill a man, but if the wielder of the club missed his aim, it would take him thirty seconds or so to get the club back into position.

[628] [302] Revenge was a sacred duty. The male relatives of a man who had been killed shaved one half of their heads until their kinsman had been avenged. As raids were constant and most of the village was related to one another, these half-shaven heads often appeared to be the typical male headdress. Mourning for

727 266 a relative who had been killed by a member of a hostile tribe was lifted by the eating of a victim from the offending tribe, all participating in this feast except the parent of the original

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victim. Cannibalism is taboo for women in most primitive groups, but both women and children participated in the cannibal feasts in the Marquesas.

The highest honors went to the warrior who captured his victim and brought him back alive, though he also received credit for an enemy killed in battle. Captives taken alive were tortured and put to death in various ingenious ways, by dismemberment, evisceration, and other methods. Under rare circumstances an extremely handsome man or woman might be adopted, but this broke up the revenge pattern and made complications. Children under three years old did not count as revenge victims, and were consequently not subjected to torture. They were eaten, however, or sometimes strangled and hung up on hooks in the sacred place as a feast for the gods. Victims taken as sacrifices to the gods were not tortured, save in rare cases. They were usually killed quickly and suspended on trees in the sacred grove by means of a hook through the jaw. Occasionally they would be hung up in this fashion while still living. When the bodies decayed they were buried in a special pit. From a social point of view, being eaten was worse than being killed and was a disgrace to the family. For this reason, if a captive had a relative in the valley at the time he was brought in, his kinsman would attempt to have him consecrated to the god immediately so that he would be killed at once and not tortured or eaten.

Certain regulations mitigated these tribal wars. The mother, sister, aunt, or wife of an individual who had been captured and eaten in revenge could go unmolested to the valley of the captors and curse them. She laid a special curse on the man who had been responsible for the capture. The woman painted her body in a particular way in red, white, and black, put on a kilt of leaves, and carried food, which she threw down in the road before the house of the killer. This food would lure the soul of the slain man and also that of the killer on whom she sought revenge. If the soul of the murdered man was in the lead, the woman would rejoice, for that gave her assurance that